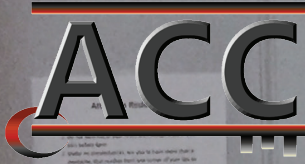


COMMUNITY SPIRIT

A Quarterly Publication of
Arkansas Community Correction

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Third Quarter 2017



Mentors make a difference

Story on page 3



Pastor retires from 7th Judicial District Drug Court



A celebration was held to honor the service of Pastor LeVon Post to the 7th Judicial Drug Court in Malvern. Post retired at the end of June, and Drug Court staff noted that he was a huge influence and helped found the program. He will be working with a church in Faulkner County.



Community Spirit
Published Quarterly by
Arkansas Community Correction

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Mentors make a difference in the lives of others

Ardella Bearden, Reentry Mentor Recruiter for ACC, is shown on the cover with D'Angelo Allen. Allen is a participant in the Jefferson County Drug Court who wants to give back to his community and he has found a rather unique way to do so.

Allen is the first person to be trained as a mentor under a section in ACC's new volunteer policy that allows those on supervision to become a mentor.

Offenders who want to fulfill this role have to have a great track record for compliance and be recommended by their supervision officer. If accepted into the program, the offender has to be trained to become a mentor.

In the cover photos, Allen had just finished an eight-hour shift at Tyson and came to mentor training, which was held at Covenant Recovery in Pine Bluff.

When training was finished, Bearden asked him if he had any questions.

"When do I start?" he asked.

According to information provided by ACC's Reentry Team, a mentor is a positive presence and a positive reinforcement in an offender's life.

The Reentry Team says when a man or woman has served time on a prison sentence, he or she is given the opportunity to return home for a second chance to become a productive, law-abiding citizen, they sometimes can face challenges that can be difficult for them to overcome.

Some of those day-to-day challenges are something we all face - like searching for a job or a suitable place to live, but when you have a felony record those challenges can seem insurmountable.

A mentor can provide support and advice for offenders to help them succeed.

Mentoring offenders can increase public safety, build stronger family relationships and help give offenders a more positive outlook on life. This program gives ordinary citizens, the faith-based community and community organizations the opportunity to make Arkansas a better, safer place to live.

Like Allen, with a little training, you, too, can become a mentor to someone in your community.

For more information or if you are interested in volunteering contact: ACC Mentor Coordinator at mentoring@arkansas.gov or by calling 501-683-5793. At the time of publication,



Allen had put his mentoring efforts on hold because he's working full-time. He plans to return to mentoring as soon as his work-life allows.

Reducing Recidivism

Research shows that having a support network on the outside is vital for returning citizens. Mentoring reduces the risk of reconviction by nearly 30% (Minnesota DOC)

It is only with the help of faith-based organizations, businesses, organizations and citizens that we will be able to combat crime in our communities.

Mentoring is a relationship that focuses on rehabilitative needs, caring support and personal growth that assists the offender to move forward with confidence.

There are two ways you can participate in the program. You can choose either inside or outside mentoring:

- Inside Mentoring is volunteering to mentor an offender who is not on parole and located at one of the ACC Residential or Reentry Facilities. Your visits would be held inside the facility.
- Outside Mentoring is volunteering to mentor an offender who is on parole. This can be done at Transitional and Field Services facilities. Your visits would be held inside the facility or in a public setting.

Youth group gives concert at Little Rock center

A youth group from Rockwall First Baptist Church in Rockwall, TX stopped in at the Central Arkansas Community Correction Center in Little Rock to give a concert.

The 28 students and their adult chaperons had completed a Summer mission trip to Nashville, TN and stopped in Little Rock to perform for residents at the center before making their way back to Texas.

Probationer earns college degree



Tre' Scott Johnson proudly displays his degrees from Southern Arkansas University Tech in the photograph at left. He graduated May 2017 with his Associate of Applied Science Computer Information Technology.

He also received a certificate in Computer Information Technology.

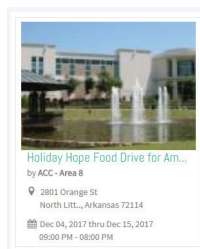
Tre intends to continue his education and obtain a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Arkansas at Hope. Johnson is 23-years-old and he is employed at Best Buy in Texarkana.

He hopes to successfully complete his probation and have his record expunged.



Find information ...

... about what is going on in your community by visiting The Good Grid for reentry website:



<https://goodgrid.com/>

Offender has success through reentry program

Danny Bishop has been an addict from the age of 11. He was bounced around from foster homes and living with different friends and family members. Bishop made a lot of bad decisions and turned to drugs when things got rough but has made a complete 360 and turned his life around. He works at Dewafflebakery in Maumelle and really enjoys his job. He has a sponsor he meets with weekly, and this is the first time he has ever been able to have a car in his own name. Bishop plans to stay in touch with Hidden Creek and really use them as his support system to keep him clean and sober. Bishop thanks BJ for his success and the staff at Hidden Creek because they have done so much for him and he states he is forever grateful and been blessed by his opportunity to be in reentry.



Good Grid resources available to all users

In addition to the information provided for offenders seeking employment and housing and for employers seeking employees, the Good Grid provides other resources.

One such item is a calendar of events that shows job fairs, classes related to job searches and projects that benefit a charity or the community.

Check it out:

<https://goodgrid.com/>

The screenshot displays the Good Grid website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Events' highlighted. Below it, a map of Arkansas is shown with a red pin. The main content area features a grid of event cards. Each card includes a title, location, date, and time. The events listed are:

- Holiday Hope Food Drive for Am...** by ACC - Area 8, 2801 Orange St, North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114, Today thru Dec 15, 2017, 09:00 PM - 08:00 PM.
- Goodwill 101 Weeklies** by Goodwill Industries, Main..., 7400 Scott Ham..., Little Rock, Arkansas 72209, Dec 06, 2017 thru May 30, 2018, 08:30 AM - 10:30 PM.
- Good Grid Weekly Meeting** by Good Grid HQ, 100 Rock Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, Today thru Dec 27, 2017, 01:30 PM - 05:00 PM.
- Holiday Celebration at the Pro...** by ACC - Area 8, 17711 Chenal Pl..., Little Rock, Arkansas 72223, Dec 09, 2017, 01:00 PM - 05:00 PM.
- Good Grid Resume Class** by ACC Area 6, 707 Robins St., Suite 102, Conway, Arkansas 72034, Dec 13, 2017, 09:30 AM - 11:30 AM.
- DWS Job Readiness** by ACC Area 6, 707 Robins St., Suite 102, Conway, Arkansas 72034, Dec 18, 2017, 09:00 AM - 11:00 AM.
- Job Fair** by ACC Area 6, 707 Robins St., Suite 102, Conway, Arkansas 72034, Dec 18, 2017, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM.
- DWS Class** by ACC Area 2, 111 Maple Street..., Mountain View, Arkansas 72560, Dec 21, 2017, 11:00 AM - 01:00 PM.

**Are you looking
for a job?**

**Arkansas Community Correction hires
professional staff throughout the state for positions ranging
from**

**Correctional Officer to Counselor to Probation Officer.
For information about applying for a job at ACC, go to:**

www.arstatejobs.com

Area 7 hosts a Drug Court & Treatment wellness day

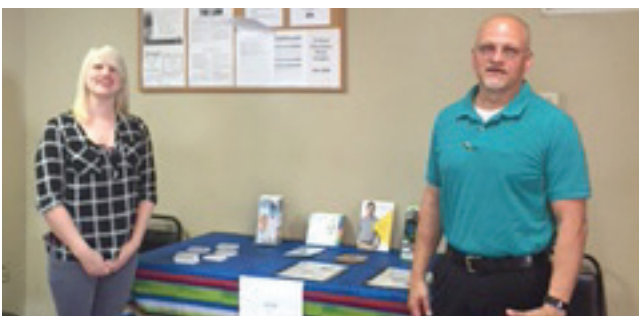


During the spring, Area 7 hosted a wellness day for offenders in Drug Court and those receiving treatment services.

Offenders took advantage of all the information that a full-range of vendors offered; from housing assistance from HUD to mental health providers. Local churches took part by offering information on self-help meetings and assistance with clothing to jobs.

Veterans Services was in attendance with information for clients who are veterans and in Drug Court. They had information on aid and programs for vets after Drug Court is completed. UAMS provided education on how at risk offenders are for HIV and STDs and passed out information and condoms. The American Red Cross was also there, and 11 people donated blood.

In all, there were 25 vendors attending and Area 7 would like to thank them for their participation, particularly to individuals, groups and organizations who donated food and drinks for participants.



Area 4 graduates four honor graduates from Drug Court

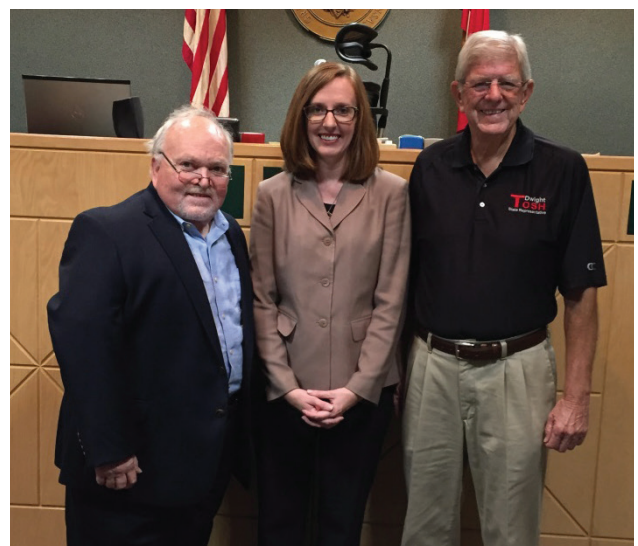
In September, the Craighead County Drug Court held a very special drug court graduation because the four graduates completed with no sanctions imposed by the Judge, known as "graduating with honors." Each graduate spoke and at times it became very emotional as they thanked their family, friends, and Drug Court staff for their help and support. They also gave encouragement to current participants. They told of how some were able to get custody of their children again as well as stories about how the staff went above and beyond to help them along their journey.

Also in attendance - Craighead County Sheriff Marty Boyd, his Chief Deputy, Captain of CID, and numerous other members of the Sheriff's Department who provided everyone with a free cookout supper.

Second Judicial Prosecuting Attorney Scott Ellington and several of the Deputy Prosecutors were also in attendance.

Pictured above are members of the Drug Court staff with the graduates. SAPL Brenda Butler, SAPL Kristy Carr, Agent Kristy Beasley, graduate Karee Fulbright, graduate Ashley Williams, graduate Sara Armstrong, graduate Stanton Popejoy, and Agent Bryan Hook.

Pictured below is Judge David Laser (who founded the Drug Court in Craighead County in 2003), Judge Melissa Richardson, and State Representative Dwight Tosh.



Offender finds success through Reentry programs

ACC's Reentry team received a letter of appreciation from Jamie Warren, one of the reentry program graduates who is shown at right. Jamie went from prison to Covenant Recovery in Pine Bluff. While there, Warren got his life back on track. During his time at Covenant Recovery he became a barber instructor at Northern Technical College.

"This program allows ex-offenders the best possible positioning for success upon release back into society," Warren said. The letter is below:

To: ACC Re-entry Program

From: Jamie Warren

August 1, 2017



My name is Jamie Warren. I was fortunate enough to be selected by the ACC to be a participant in the Covenant Re-Entry Program in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. My experience with the program has definitely been one of success. During my time of participation in the Covenant Re-Entry Program the amount of assistance I received was amazing. I was able to obtain my Barber Instructors license and able to work as a Barber Instructor at Northern Technical College here in Pine Bluff. This achievement not only allows me to maintain gainful employment, but also gives me the opportunity to give back to the community by helping others reach their own goal of becoming Barber/Stylist. The Re-Entry program provided necessary resources which gave me a head start on doing the right thing in life and made it possible for me to avoid the common pitfalls that so many offenders incur upon their release from prison. Pitfalls such as lack of finances and job opportunity. A release from prison for an individual lacking basic resources for a stable foundation for functioning in society often lead to an error in thinking which sometimes result in criminal behavior. The Re-Entry program directly attacks problems such as these in the correctional system. This program allows ex-offenders the best possible positioning for success upon release back into society. I have to say, this program truly works and I strongly advise anyone seeking to get life on the right track to be participant.

I would like to thank the entire Arkansas Community Correction for the opportunity to better myself. I would also like to personally thank the Director of the Covenant Re-Entry Program, Mr. Jeremy Mckenzie, as well as the Assistant Director, Mrs. Amanda Wooldridge for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and for the level of dedication they display for helping others. It does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

Sincerely,

Reentry news from across the state

Area 8

(Parole in Pulaski County and Parole/Probation in Lonoke County)

Job Fair

ACC, in conjunction with some of our community partners, hosted a Job Fair at The Water Shed on July 13. There were more than 60 offenders in attendance and 11 resources/employers.



John Gray

John Gray, shown below, of Covenant Recovery, holds his WAGE certificate from the Department of Workforce Services. WAGE™ is a job readiness training program conducted by the Adult Education



Covenant Recovery clean up

The men pictured below are offenders going through ACC's reentry program. They are working to make the community and themselves better through community cleanup programs.



Division of Arkansas Department of Career Education. The WAGE™ Program is a work readiness program designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

Reentry news from across the state

Chris Angeli GED Completion

Chris Angeli, shown below, has successfully completed the first half of his GED testing. Chris is a shining example to all for our residents of how hard work and effort payoff. We are certain that this will be the first of many successes for Chris as he makes his reentry into the community.



Area 3 (Parole/Probation in Randolph, Sharp, Lawrence, Independence, Jackson, Cleburne, White and Prairie Counties)

DWS workshop

Area 3 held a DWS workforce class with 47 probationers and parolees in attendance (shown below.)



Freddy Walls

Freddy Walls, shown at left, received his driver's license and purchased a 2003 GMC Yukon before his completion of the reentry program at Covenant Recovery!



When you are looking for a career with Arkansas Community Correction, you'll find open jobs at the agency at: www.arstatejobs.com

Reentry news from across the state

Kevin Pennington

Pictured is Kevin Pennington of Covenant Recovery holding his very first pay check. Kevin was given a job at Big Red Travel Plaza one month after being in the reentry program.



Area 5 (Parole/Probation in Crawford, Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Sebastian, Scott, Polk and Montgomery Counties)

Job Readiness Class

Reentry Officer Derek Wilson & Career Placement & Planning Specialist Paula Cox are shown below visiting with a full house of people attending the Job Readiness Class presented by the Department of Workforce Services at the Fort Smith Parole Office.



Area 4 (Parole/Probation in Clay, Greene, Craighead, Mississippi and Poinsett Counties)

Job Fair (2)

The Goodwill Career Center hosted a job fair with more than 100 participants and 25 employers. Many of those participants, shown at right, were individuals on supervision with ACC. Reentry Officer Christa Eldridge was there to represent ACC.



Reentry news from across the state

Area 1 (*Parole/Probation in Benton, Washington and Madison Counties*)

Workforce Job Class

Greg Bodiford, shown below, from Department of Workforce conducts a Job Readiness Class at the Returning Home Center on Sept. 13.



Community Cleanup at Bicentennial Park

Offenders at Covenant Recovery in Malvern, shown below and at right, work to giving back to the commu-

nity at the Community Cleanup at Bicentennial Park in Malvern.



Reentry news from across the state

Area 3 (*Parole/Probation in Randolph, Sharp, Lawrence, Independence, Jackson, Cleburne, White and Prairie Counties*)

DWS workshop and job fair

Julie Varvil from ESA staffing and the Department of Workforce Services, shown at right and below, hosted a presentation about how to apply for jobs, how to properly fill out



an application, the screening process, the background check, the felon box, the hiring process and what employers are looking for.

Area 4 (*Parole/Probation in Clay, Greene, Craighead, Mississippi and Poinsett Counties*)

Job Fair

A job fair was held at the Goodwill Career Center in Blytheville,. More than 30 offenders showed up and created a resume on The Good Grid, and two employers were on hand to conduct interviews. Representatives from
(continued on page 13)

Reentry news from across the state

(Continued from page (12))

the Mississippi County University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Office discussed necessary life skills, and representatives from Head Start spoke about child care.



The Good Grid is a network of service providers that connects organizations like yours to resources & opportunities that help you do what you do better.

The Best Part?

It is 100% free and easy to create your own page and get started.

When you connect, you will be able to:

- Post volunteer & full time opportunities to the community of Arkansans who are passionate about your organization
- Access & search a database of more than 100,000 services
- Publicize events (like fundraisers, marathons, etc.) to a community of social impact minded people
- Manage a microsite for your organization

CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

SIGN UP

1. Open a Google Chrome Browser
2. Go to www.goodgrid.com
3. Click Sign up in the Right corner
4. Complete the Sign up process

1

CONFIRM YOUR ACCOUNT

1. Look for the APPROVAL email within 24 hours of signing up.
2. Click [Confirm](#)
3. Create your password and sign in.

2

QUESTIONS?

Once you sign up, if you have any questions contact us by phone, email, or a help desk ticket.

team@goodgrid.com or
(501) 687 2346

3

Reentry news from across the state

Gassville Mentor Training

Pictured below in the center is Mentor Coordinator Ardella Bearden holding mentor training in Gassville.



PWC Ms. Arkansas

The Phenomenal Woman's Conference was held at CAC in Little Rock. Pictured at right is Kristen Glover Belew - Miss Arkansas 2011 who spoke about following your dreams and never giving up to this amazing group of women.

Jack rebuilding life at Covenant Recovery

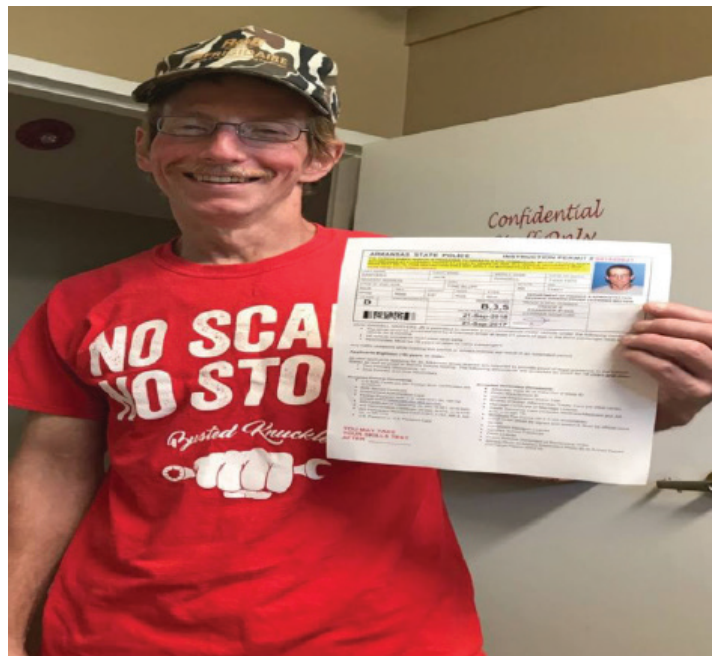
Jack, at right, spent about 15 years in ADC. Like many inmates, he had a bit of trouble at first adjusting to all the rules that go with prison life.

But he settled down pretty quickly and began to rebuild his life.

He's at Covenant Recovery in Pine Bluff and is doing very well. In fact, that's a very important document he's holding in the picture.

It's his driver's permit-- the first one he's ever had, which is amazing considering Jack is 46 years old.

We're proud of him, and we can't wait to see what he accomplishes next!



Reentry news from across the state

Covenant city wide clean up

The residents of Covenant Recovery Reentry took part in the citywide litter pick up in Pine Bluff. There's always lot of work to do, and people are encouraged to come out and help out. Covenant Recovery provided lunch for all volunteers. This is a great way to build community spirit and make the city sparkle. The guys in the picture are all from Covenant Recovery. ACC Reentry Officer Jeffery Little and Executive Director Jeremy Mckenzie are also pictured.



Melissa Hart at Hazel House

Melissa Hart, at right, entered ACC's reentry program in March at Hazel House in Hot Springs.

She's done very well and she's had a full-time job at a hotel since April. Melissa has progressed to Phase IV of the reentry program, which means she can move into her own apartment with her children! In the picture at right, the man on the left is the founder of Starting Over Ministries, which helps people who are starting over get furniture.

And the two young people you see are in Teen Challenge. They donated their time to help move the furniture for Melissa. It's amazing how good things start happening when offenders seize the opportunity to turn their life around!

